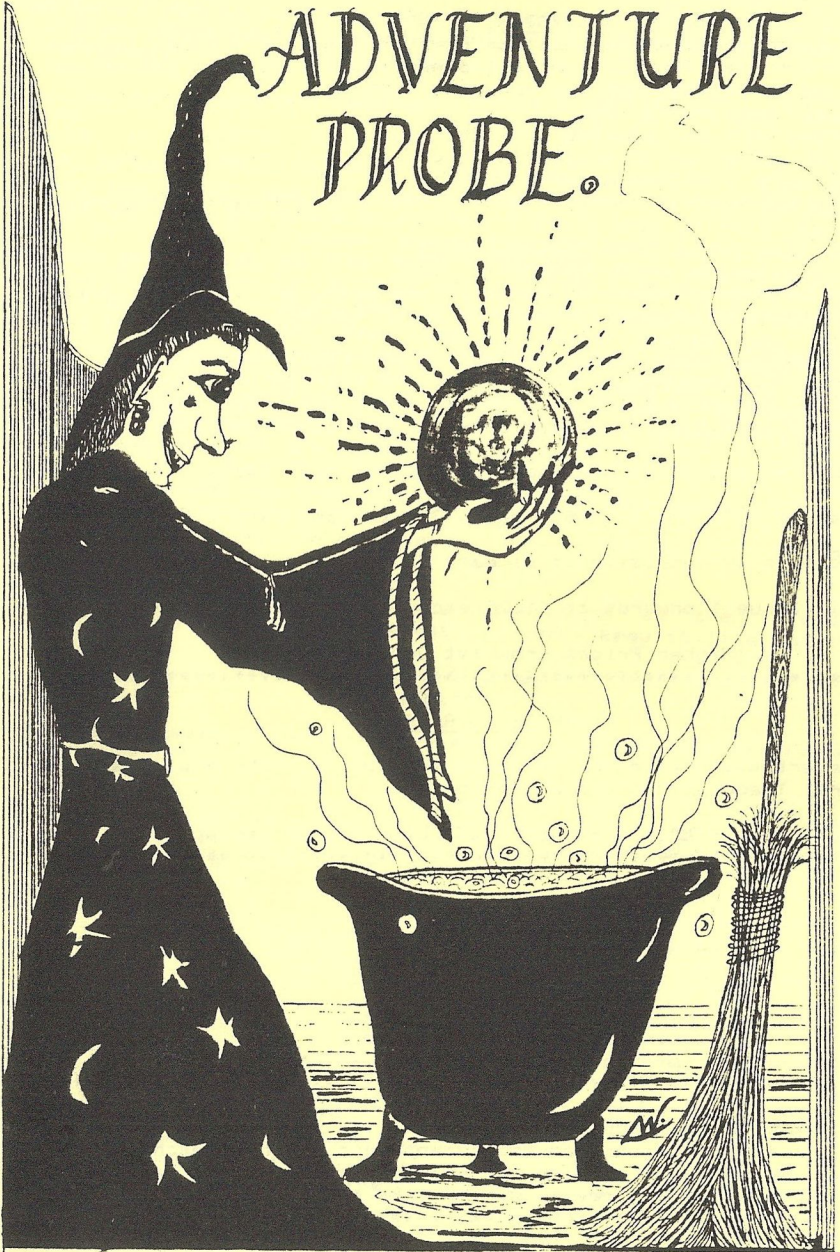


ADVENTURE PROBE.



£1.25

VOLUME II

ISSUE 1

JANUARY 1988

EDITOR: SANDRA SHARKEY, 78 MERTON ROAD, WIGAN WN3 6AT.

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Copies can be ordered month by month if you wish, or you can order up to SIX copies in advance. Prices as shown below:-

United Kingdom	£1.25 per copy
Europe (incl. S. Ireland)	£1.75 per copy
Rest of World (Surface Mail)	£1.75 per copy
Rest of World (Air Mail)	£2.00 per copy

All back copies are still available commencing with Issue 1 June 1986.

Issues 1, 2 and 3 at 50p each (75p Europe, £1 R.O.W.)

Issues 4 to 19 inclusive at £1 each (£1.50 Europe, £2 R.O.W.)

VOLUME II Issue 1 onwards at £1.25 each (£1.75 Europe, £2 R.O.W.)

(Higher Prices from 1st January 1988)

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WHAT IS ADVENTURE PROBE!

Adventure Probe is a monthly magazine for adventurers. It is meant to be a place where solitary adventurers can find help, companionship and friendship from fellow enthusiasts.

Okay, so you've read all that before. Why am I writing about it again?

A very serious matter has been brought to my attention. One of our readers had a very nasty anonymous letter which has been followed by lots of annoying telephone calls. Now I don't know if this is as a result of their name, address and telephone number being published in Probe or not as they do offer help in various other magazines.

I would just like to state that if the person responsible for these actions is reading this now, then I would advise you to stop immediately. I find this sort of behaviour very childish and repulsive. If it is meant to be funny then I suggest that you put yourself in the shoes of the person on the receiving end. Apart from anything else, like common decency, these offences are criminal and, as such are punishable by law.

If anyone else has had the same sort of experience please let me know and I will do my best to put a stop to it, even if it means withdrawing the telephone helpline and the Kings/Queens section of Probe.

"Adventure Probe" has built up a reputation as the friendliest adventure publication on the market, so let's keep it like that!!

Sandra Sharkey
(Editor)

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EDITORIAL

Happy New Year!

As I've been getting confused with the numbering of 'Probe', I thought what better time to use a new system than the first month of a brand new year. So, welcome to Volume 2 Issue 1 of Adventure Probe.

Thanks to everyone who sent Christmas cards, I've never received so many! Many thanks to Barbara Gibb for my Father Christmas, it's lovely.

Judging from the amount of letters I have received recently from people new to adventuring, adventures seem to be increasing in popularity. The Beginners Tips section has proved to be invaluable for them, so keep the tips rolling in.

I've had a few letters asking if 'Shymer' is going to be reviewed in 'Probe', I'm sorry but I have mixed feelings about doing that. If the reviewer gave it a rave review I'd probably feel that they didn't want to hurt my feelings, if they gave it a bad review, then I'd use my powers as Editor and refuse to publish it. So, you'll have to wait and see if the big mags review it, at least then you'll know that you're reading an unbiased opinion. I've also been asked if the game will be available on other machines and I'm pleased to tell you that Mandy Rodrigues is converting it to Commodore and it should be available from Mandy soon. A Spectrum version is also underway. Pat Winstanley is converting it for me using PAW. We'll be trying to get it ready for February.

Has anyone played Driller? It's absolutely brilliant, you don't have to be quick on the joystick and there's plenty in it to appeal to the adventurer. I would thoroughly recommend it.

I'm looking forward to the Adventure Creator for the ST that Incentive are working on. I think it will be called STAC and it will have a whole host of new features, I'm bursting with ideas for adventures using it. To be honest it was the news about STAC that persuaded me to beg, borrow or steal an ST (I ended up having to buy one!). Also the rumours that Infocom aren't going to release any more adventures on Amstrad helped me make my decision.

I'm introducing a new section to the magazine. Dust off your Quills, GACs, PAWs, GENESIS creators, and ADVENTURE BUILDER SYSTEMS, 'Probe' is having its own writers' section. It's something I've wanted to introduce for a long time, but my affiliation to 'Contact' prevented me from doing so. As I haven't had so much as a letter from Colin Page since he took over, I decided that I may as well go ahead and implement the idea. Just one problem, I don't have time to write the section myself so who better to rope in than our very own Pat Winstanley. The new section will take up two or three pages every month, so if you have any queries on any of the utilities or you have some useful tips to pass on then write directly to Pat at her home address:

PAT WINSTANLEY, 13 Hollington Way, Winstanley, Wigan. WN3 6LS

It's nice to see reviews coming in for the BBC, thanks to Barbara Gibb and Neil Shipman. We're still neglecting the Atari 800XL though. If you fancy trying your hand at reviewing, then get in touch and check that no-one else is planning to review the same game.

Who is J. R.? None other than our own John R. Barnsley who has been sending in lots of hints etc. to make sure that I have plenty of material in hand for use in the various sections of the mag. John is the person I turn to when I'm totally stuck in an adventure that no-one else can help with. John you are a treasure! (Stop blushing!)

Jim O'Keefe, reviewer extraordinaire, gives up a lot of his adventuring time to write reviews, and put in a lot of hard work doing the mini-series of interviews for 'Probe', and he even found time to write another Christmas story for us. Your help is much appreciated Jim.

Graham and Kay Wheeler and Joan Pancott put in a lot of time for me recently doing excellent playtests on 'Shymer', prolific contributors to the whole adventuring scene and well known to most of the big mag columnists. Many thanks to you.

Alf Baldwin, Dave Brown, Mandy Rodrigues, Jack Higham, Jackie Holt, Paul Brunyee, Ron Rainbird the list goes on and on. So many people contribute to Probe in one way or another that I feel quite guilty when I get all the praise! Thank you to all of you, I've said it before and I'll say it again, 'Probe' would not exist if it wasn't for all the help I receive from readers.

Software houses are still 'backwards in coming forwards' when it comes to supporting us. However, we do get lots of support from Incentive Software, Tartan Software and Jack Lockerby, who have provided most of the review games that we actually receive. Please give them your support, they deserve it.

Pete Gerrard deserves a special mention as he has proved to be a very good friend as well as a contributor. He can't play pool though. I promised him a few months ago that I wouldn't publish anything in the magazine about our marathon pool competition during the summer. So I won't embarrass him by telling everyone that I beat him 21/14. Don't worry Pete, your secret is safe with me! (That's another reader blushing!)

There is one 'unsung hero' who nobody knows about. He hates computers, doesn't have any idea what adventuring is all about, but without him I don't think I'd ever get the magazine out on time. He comes home from work sometimes when I'm right in the middle of things and sets about cooking tea. He looks after the little ones while I get on with my typing etc. He listens to all my hopes and dreams even though he doesn't have a clue what I'm talking about. Who is he? Steve Sharkey, my husband, and own personal treasure!

Right, that's enough of my rambling for one month. I look forward to another good year with all of you.

See you next month.

Sandra

SOFTWARE REVIEWS

ENERGEM ENIGMA - Precision Games - £4.99 plus 21p postage.

This is the follow-up game to the EXTRICATOR and is not in the least a let down. Though the inlay boasts it is a text/graphic adventure, I found that compared to the number of rooms, there are in fact, few pictures - the majority of which can only be considered as just about adequate, though I did find the one of the lighthouse particularly eyecatching. The room descriptions tend to be rather short, and there is also a lack of responses to pertinent inputs.

Anyway, there's this nutty Professor who needs some rare crystals for the latest project he is working on, but unfortunately, they exist on only one planet in the Glenbo star system. The agent who was sent to collect these crystals failed to return so now it's up to you to go to the planet and find all the equipment left scattered around by the missing agent and use them to locate the four differently coloured crystals and then transport them, and yourself, back to HQ via an underground (beam me up Scotty) tube.

However, things are never straightforward, are they? The atmosphere of the planet is unbreathable, so you have to carry your own supply of air. Four air bottles are all that you have been issued with - though the game can be completed easily enough with this ration - you will, in all probability, run out many times before solving it.

Examine anything that moves, or doesn't, it will pay to take clues from the pictures too - especially at the well!

The crystals must be located in the correct colour order with a crystalometer (they can only be seen with the aid of a helmet).

Despite the failings I've mentioned there is that certain something about the game that kept me going back for more, and I'm sure that most gamers will also spend many happy hours (and perhaps sleepless nights) bashing away at the keyboard before completing this adventure.

Maybe a little overpriced, but you won't regret buying it.

Reviewer - GRAHAM COLLIER - Spectrum

.....

ENERGEM ENIGMA is available from:

PRECISION GAMES, 2 Fern Hill, Basildon, Essex. SS16 5UE

DEFINITION OF AN ADVENTURE

Spending hours solving a problem and turning in great glee to inform the rest of the family of your success only to find them piled up in a heap on the floor by the kitchen door because you were so engrossed - you forgot to feed them!

Mandy Rodrigues

Those of you who have played any of John Wilson's adventures will know just how devious his games are, and this one is just as difficult! Like all the others, it is text only and was written using the Quill and Patch, though it was the intention of the author to have included some graphics with this game. However, I don't think the inclusion of them could improve on the atmosphere the text conjures up in the mind.

Any references which are made and bear any resemblance to persons, other games and magazines, I'm informed, are purely ... intentional!

Laden down with gold, and with Gullem's ring tucked safely in his pocket, Bulbo returned to the comfort of his little burrow and decided to enjoy a more peaceful way of life to his adventuring. However, after a few months, boredom set in, and to alleviate this, he took up the sport of Boggling. But, unfortunately, Bulbo wasn't much of a player and ended up losing Gullem's ring on a final wager to try and recoup his losses. When Bulbo realised what he had done he slunk back to his burrow and became a recluse.

You are Fuddo, nephew to Bulbo, and your quest is to retrieve Gullem's ring from Jimmy Covenant (a black plastic welder, who lives somewhere to the north of Bulbo's burrow) and return it to Bulbo. With you is the obligatory Backpack in which are some items which may or may not be useful. One of the first things you should do, though, is to locate Slam (a good friend) and talk him into going with you, and also to help (the game cannot be solved without him).

Watch out for Gullem (though he can't really be avoided, as he turns up all over the place - usually searches the Backpack for his ring), a particularly nasty character, as are the Trolls (avoid them if carrying the spade). The Dragon will kill you only if it is angry (but not if you have a certain object in the Backpack) - you will need to get past him somehow or other! There are also some other locations where you will have to put your brain (or Slam's) into overdrive to make any progress.

I can thoroughly recommend this game, though novices and the faint hearted should steer clear ... you won't solve it!

Slightly under-priced and well worth the outlay.

Reviewer - GRAHAM COLLIER - Spectrum

.....

FUDDO AND SLAM is available from:

ZANOBI SOFTWARE, 26 SPOTLAND TOPS, CUTGATE, ROCHDALE, LANCS. OL12 7NX

DEFINITION OF FRUSTRATION

Spending three months typing "SAY 'GIVE LIFE WITH THEE MY TRUSTY BLADE'" near the end of The Quest only to find (quite by accident) that the correct input is "SHOUT 'GIVE LIFE WITH THEE MY TRUSTY BLADE'".

Mandy Rodrigues

Bungo's Quest for Gold - Gary Stimson - £1.75

Bungo's Quest for Gold is a budget priced homegrown adventure from the Quill of Gary Stimson. The adventure is loosely based upon a certain well known quest involving such characters as Thorin and Gandalf. These characters have been replaced with Borin, who is, as the name suggests, rather boring - author's comments, not mine - and Grandelf, a magician of some note.

You play the part of Bungo, living in your rather ordinary hole. Actually, this part brings to mind the Four Yorkshiremen sketch, but I digress.

Grandelf quests Bungo to collect the treasure from the dragon's cave and return it to his hole. Quite why Grandelf can't manage this feat himself, with Grandelf mostly following your every footstep, is not fully explained, but Bungo's lot is not to question, merely to proceed with the quest!

You start in the familiar setting of the comfortable, tunnel-like hall with a freshly painted red circular door off to one side. Do you think that trying to open said door, getting your hand stuck fast to the paintwork and then dying of starvation is rather an improbable ending? Hmmm. I do.

Anyway, you continue past the trolls clearing, over the river and so on, mostly followed, as I mentioned, by Grandelf and Borin. The instructions accompanying my tape, although they are being revised, indicate that you can communicate with these two characters using the TALK <name> structure. The next command you enter will then be directed to the character you are talking to. Having said that, the only response I've managed to get from this approach is "Shan't!".

The adventure is vintage Quilled, lacking any graphics or frills. Commands are mostly of the verb-noun type and, alas, the quantity of recognised verbs does not seem considerable. Location descriptions are adequate but not particularly atmospheric. After all, when you've seen one trolls clearing.....

Bungo's does have a smattering of humour though. For example, periodically, and true to it's predecessor, Borin sits down and starts singing, but instead of gold, he sings "Why are we waiting...". As with most humorous adventures, the humour wanes as you see it time and time again but this is unavoidable anyway.

If you would like a diversion down a well trodden path, in an adventure which is not altogether large and rather unsophisticated in comparison with recent offerings, then this is for you. The puzzles are mostly very logical, the majority being quite straightforward and some requiring a certain degree of lateral thinking. Bungo's is really a beginners type of adventure. At £1.75 though, who can complain! Also, a much larger, PAWed adventure is planned for June. It may be worth checking out.

Atmosphere - 4/10 Playability - 5/10 Difficulty - 5/10
Value for money - 9/10 Overall enjoyment - 6/10
Reviewer - Paul Brunyee - Spectrum

Bungo's Quest for Gold is available for 48K Spectrums from:
Gary Stimson, 4 Fox Covert Drive, Roade, Northampton. NN7 2LL
Cheques for £1.75 should be made payable to Gary Stimson.

PAT'S OTHER PATCH!

Ok! Ok! I'll own up ... I was the olchihalec at the Amstrad show and for good reason. For the first time ever I had managed to arrange for the 'boss' to look after the kids while I had a day out. But I'd been rather conned by the magazine pictures of London based shows ... packed to bursting with all the 'names' there to be met and chatted with. What a let down!

The Manchester show had three great drawbacks from my point of view:

1) SIZE ... there were only about 100 stands most of which were devoted to the PCW and PC machines - fine if that's what you have but if you're a poor CPC owner like me who really has no interest in spreadsheets, databases and expensive video and scanning gadgets there was virtually nothing of interest.

2) NAMES ... I had hoped to become acquainted face to face with some of the 'names and voices' who have become familiar to me over the phone in the past year. No such luck! Few leisure industry people bothered to make the trek north ... why? However, I did meet a couple of mainstream magazine bods, notably Chris Anderson and Simon Rockman both of whom proved very talkative and great fun. Where were the Pilgrim and Gandalf? The Pilgrim I can't speak for, but Gandalf was definitely in evidence, tall hat akimbo, swapping pleasantries with your 'shark'. (By the way, has Sandra told you of the anti-helter-skelter slip? NO? Then let me enlighten you! Would you beloumphhhh..! (Ed. Gagged!!!!))

3) TIME ... Despite my other comments I was sorry to find that the day was over (not so the bank manager!). I didn't want to leave the show (oh alright then - the bar!) but the chance of a lift home and a determined hand under each armpit caused me to be deposited in the Shark (boss's) car where I commenced to sleep the twenty miles home in a perpendicular position ... at least P. G. made no complaints later (of my leaning against him in the back seat so I assume I managed to remain an upright citizen despite the mother's ruin). (I must stop using brackets!) (And exclamation marks!!)

Aaaaaanyway, the show is over - time for other things! Many thanks to all those of you who have expressed good wishes about my new venture into mainstream writing. It's a weird business ... seems to be more who you know than what you know, but the money's good so I'm not complaining! (oops!). The first few issues of ACE disappointed me as I felt that they were rather superficial, but I must admit that the latest (no. 4 at the time of writing) shows a definite improvement. Prhabs it's the 3 month delay inherent in such mags beginning to reap rewards?

Now then, onto finer things. Have you seen the brand new and utterly amazing system from Incentive? Freescape is mindboggling! I'm not and never have been an arcade adventure lover. Perhaps mainly because I object to solving a problem then getting killed and having to start again from the beginning. Full marks to the Driller programmers who have run the gauntlet by incorporating a save/load routine. Driller is an adventure of mega proportions and unlike anything I've ever played before.

The nearest concept I can suggest is that of Sentinel but perhaps that's due to the 3-D effects. I must admit that Sentinel bored me after half a dozen screens due to its monotony. Driller doesn't suffer from that. Imagine an adventure where you have virtually no verbal clues except a couple of words here and there telling you where you are and how successful you've been at tackling a problem. Then imagine the same game offering all the interactive puzzles you have come to expect from the best text adventures ... brain benders like the babel fish in MHGTTG ... but all done by shooting things, not to kill but to activate/deactivate switches, guards etc.

The plot of Driller is irrelevant (though nicely designed) as the pleasure of the game is in problem solving and orienteering. There are places where you have to run the gauntlet of attacking aliens, but thanks to the save routine you can practice to your heart's content until you amalgamate your experience to a previous successful save.

If Driller is available on your machine ... buy it (and help!!!!) ... I think I'm stuck!)

On the more conventional adventure front I'm looking forward to the imminent release of both GAC (as STAC) and PAW for the Atari ST. I'm also looking forward to the financial circumstances which will let me find desk space for the said machine! Aarrgh! The drawbacks of a non-computing household.

And talking of households, would any of you with pre-school or infant school children care to write to me with a view to discussing the types of games both available and dreamt of for these groups. I'd love to hear from you!

Enough ... Sandra won't let me fill any more space (a common complaint amongst editors it seems) so I'll finish by saying "Thanks" to all my friends and advisors.

Best wishes for 1988 to all

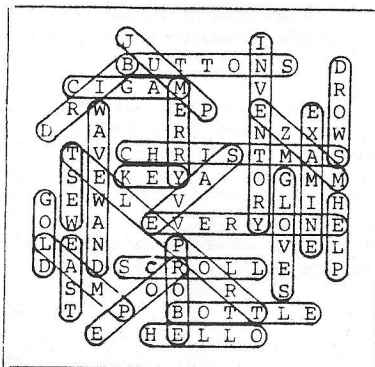
Pat Winstanley

Christmas Wordsearch - Solution

HALL OF FAME

Thanks to the following readers for sending in contributions over the last month:

Alf Baldwin, Paul Brunyee, Graham Collier, Jack Higham, Jackie Holt, Jim O'Keeffe, Lorna Paterson, Neil Shipman.



LETTERS

It's been a long time since I wrote but since I bought the ATARI 520 STFM I've been engrossed in the Infocom games which make everything else look like amateur night. Still, I've still got both my Spectrums and the Dragon so can still enjoy the best of both worlds.

The Atari is superb and possibly the only thing that will bring out the Speccy again will be Tom Frost's new adventures. I finished Crown of Ramhotep and Prospector last month. I came first in a race with Sue Burke and Walter Pooley.

Sue wrote a few times and even sent a photo. The photo was good but it took a few days to get over the shock of opening an envelope and being assaulted by a few sheets of psychedelic paper. I believe you met her at a show and disowned her, it does not surprise me.

By the way my mail has been very erratic for a long while so could you publish an apology to anyone who has written and not received a reply. Mike Wade sent me some tapes months ago which I still haven't got and Tom Frost's also got lost in the mail, so goodness knows who is waiting for a letter. Recently all seems to be running smoothly.

I have rung a few times on the Saturday morning but you seem to be engaged all the time. Hopefully Santa will bring me a printer for Christmas then you will be able to read my letters.

I need help on the Labours of Hercules if anyone has finished it.

730 SGT. JOHN MOORE, C/D Sgts mess, RAF Wildenrath, BFPD 42.

(As your post has been so erratic I thought I'd answer your letter in the pages of the mag.

By the time you read this I should have my ST, isn't Santa Claus wonderful! The older kids keep telling me there is no such person, but when they grow up they'll realise just how wrong they are. Father Christmas does exist it's just that everyone has their very own! When you're little it's Mum and Dad, when you grow up it changes to husband or wife, and when you grow old your grandchildren can do a very good impression.

I'm glad you enjoyed your race with Sue and Walter, I love playing adventures with other people, I just hate paying the phone bill! It is more fun when you compete or help each other. I really didn't walk away from Sue too much at the show, just at every stall!

My Saturday chatline is proving to be very popular so I've put aside a couple of hours on a Sunday as well.

Alf Baldwin has completed Labours of Hercules if anyone needs help, his number is in the Telephone Helpline.

Hope you got your printer for Christmas..... Sandra)

.....

Has anybody finished Doctor Who and the Warlord (which I recommended to fellow BBC adventurers in 1987)? I've completed 98% of this adventure and I keep going back to it to try out different ideas, but I'm still one move short of being able to kill the green minion in the bomb cellar. If you've got the solution, please get in touch.

Probe has been excellent value for money over the last couple of years and I'm sure that most of us can stand the extra 25p an issue which Sandra now finds it necessary to charge. We can't expect her to subsidise our adventuring craze out of her own pocket so I hope all avid readers will continue to support the magazine. Keep up the good work, Sandra!

NEIL SHIPMAN, 1 Heath Gardens, Coalpit Heath, Bristol. BS17 2TQ

(Thanks for the kind words Neil, thanks also for topping up your subscription I appreciate it. So many of you have written supportive letters like this, that I felt quite choked. Lots of you have offered to pay the difference in price on copies paid in advance. Obviously it will help, but I must stress that existing subscriptions WILL be honoured. Thanks again to everyone..... Sandra)

.....

Congratulations on doing a marvellous job. Adventure Probe is worth every penny. It is so nice to have something like this arriving in the post each month among the bills.

I have been having problems with the end game in St. Brides (Spectrum). After returning to the school and dismantling the wireless, I go back down the passage but am told 'You are too big to get fully into the closet.' I have tried only carrying the lamp and screwdriver, changing back from the Victorian dress to the gymslip but I still get the same message. Can anyone help?

If anyone else with a Commodore 64, who uses Printshop and has trouble getting coloured ribbons, they might like to try HSV Computer Services Ltd., 23 Hampstead House, Town Centre, Basingstoke, RG21 1LG. Previously, I had tried several firms only to be told that the coloured paper and ribbons were only available in America.

JOY BIRLEY, Eryl Don, Mona Terrace, Criccieth, Gwynedd. LL52 0HG

.....

In Red Herrings (Issue 19) of 'Adventure Probe', Mandy Rodrigues has listed some Red Herrings from Infocom Adventures that aren't in my opinion actually Red Herrings. This rather surprised me as Mandy tends to specialise in Infocom games and I would not have expected her to make so many errors. The Red Herrings I disagree with are as follows:-

ZORK II - Teapot - This is used for putting water into the bucket and for removing water from the bucket, this item is in fact essential as some locations cannot be reached without it.

(continued)

ZORK II - Brick - This is an explosive when combined with string, it is used to get a crown (treasure) from the box with a hole in.
 ZORK II - Club - This is a vital clue on the way to handle the oddly angled room, the name 'Babe Ruth' on the club is to make you think of baseball.
 ZORK I - Gunk - This can be used to repair the plastic boat if you accidentally puncture it.
 ZORK I - Leaves - Moving the leaves reveals a grate, this grate can only be opened and used as an exit from the maze if the leaves are no longer on it.
 INFIDEL - Padlock - This must be broken and removed so that you can open your trunk and collect vital items from inside it.
 INFIDEL - Shim - This must be removed so that you can move the beam.
 INFIDEL - Crate - This contains a vital piece of equipment which you need to find the entrance to the pyramid.
 G. & K. WHEELER, 2 Burford Close, Southdown, Bath, Avon.

.....

A couple of months ago I started sending out what I have named 'Advocabs' to a fair number of the 'Lost Souls' who have written to me - it has made quite an impact, so I shall tell you what is involved and why I think it could stir up some interest and involvement from many of your readers.

As you know, some adventures can't be solved unless most of the words held in the vocabulary bank of the game have been discovered. And while there are some players who enjoy this aspect of adventuring, I, and I'm sure many others do too, find it particularly boring. So, by now you have probably guessed that 'Advocabs' are lists of the complete vocabularies of adventures!

Anyway, what I was thinking was, why don't you try writing a few lines on the subject in some future edition of 'Probe' and see what sort of response it receives - if favourable, it would be something that no other fanzine or magazine has yet thought of, at least, I don't think they have!

I have also given some thought as to how it could all be implemented. To save space and to avoid having to write out each word fully a list of the most commonly used ones could be compiled. Each word could be represented by its own unique code - say, its first letter followed by a two or three digit number. This list could then be printed, or readers could buy one, and it would be used as a master reference.

All of this is just theory at the moment, and unless both yourself and/or the readers like the idea it will probably remain so.

GRAHAM COLLIER, 9 Banwell Road, Odd Down, Bath, Avon. BA2 2UH

(I think you've come up with a good idea, Graham, but unfortunately I don't have any spare time to organise it. If anyone is interested in pursuing this idea a little further then please contact Graham. If you come up with something that would only require me to do the photocopying then I'd be willing to do that for the same price as the solutions, 25p to cover costs..... Sandra)

It appears from this month's Sinclair User that you know or have had dealings with Wayne Styles Adventure Swop Club.

I don't know if you know, but a couple of months ago he had to close down the club due to lack of support. I wrote off to him and asked if I could try and get the club going again, as to me, a swop club for adventurers is needed.

There must be dozens of people with games to swop. He gave me a few addresses of club members who I have written to, but obviously I need more new members.

What would you charge to put an advert in your mag, just to say that I was now running the club and to write for details? The cost is as it was, £1 per swop to cover postage etc. Any pennies left over would buy another game for the club. Spectrum only.

PAUL AVIS, 49 Hewitt Road, Hamworthy, Poole, Dorset. BH15 4QB

.....
IN-TOUCH

I've got the following SPECTRUM tapes for sale:
Invincible Island, Black Crystal, Oracles Cave, Se Kaa of Assiah all at £1.25 each. Planet of Death, Spiderman, Secret of St. Brides, Subsunk, Hacker all at £2 each. Neverending Story (128K) £2.50. Fourth Protocol £3, Adventure Quest and Red Moon £3.50 each. Terrors of Trantoss £4.

JACKIE HOLT, 36 Eland Street, New Basford, Nottingham. NG7 7DT
.....

AMSTRAD cassette software for sale:
Jewels of Darkness £6, Starglider £6, Armageddon Man £4, Price of Magik £3.50, The Boggit, Neverending Story, Very Big Cave Adventure all at £2.50 each. The Hobbit (without book), Rebel Planet £2 each. Seabase Delta, Subsunk, Kobayashi Naru, Message From Andromeda, DAA 'n Everything' all at £1 each.

All original and in VGC. Willing to swap (anything considered).

Please write to LRD(T) Dave Brown, Staff of FOF1, 3 The Parade, H. M. Naval Base, PORTSMOUTH, Hampshire. PO1 3NB

I would also like to wish all "Fellow Adventurers" a Happy New Year from the Royal Naval Gandalf.
.....

After selling the QL last summer, I am left with four pieces of Software. They are STEVE DAVIS SNOOKER, MATCH POINT, WEST (adventure), and CHESS. I would like £4 for the lot (6 cartridges) or would swap for a Spectrum or Commodore adventure. It seems a pity to simply reformat them for use with my Spectrum.

JOY BIRLEY, Eryl Don, Mona Terrace, Criccieth, Gwynned. LL52 OHG
.....

LIST OF SOLUTIONS AVAILABLE FROM PROBE

Send 25p per solution to cover costs. Price includes P & P.
Small payments can be sent using stamps of any denomination.
New solutions are shown in capitals.

1942 Mission, ADVENTURE 100, Adventure Quest, Adventureland, Aftershock, ALIEN (SEVERN SOFTWARE), Alter Earth, Amazon, Apache Gold, Arnold Goes Somewhere Else, Arrow of Death Pt. 1, Arrow of Death Pt. 2, Aztec Tomb Pt. 1, Ballyhoo, Barsak the Dwarf, Beetle Quest, BEAUTIFUL DREAMER, Beer Hunter, The Big Sleaze, BIBLES, Black Fountain, BLADE OF BLACKPOOL, Blade the Warrior, The Boggit, Bored of the Rings, Borrowed Time, Brawn Free, Buckaroo Banzai, Buggy, The Case of the Mandarin Murder, THE CASE OF THE MIXED-UP SHYMER, Castle Adventure, Castle Blackstar, Castle of Riddles, Castle of Terror, CASTLE THADE, The Challenge, Christmas Adventure, Circus, Classic Adventure, The Claws of Despair, Colditz, Colossal Adventure, The Colour of Magic, COMMANDO, Computer Adventure, The Count, Cracks of Fire, Crystal Frog, Crystals of Carus, Crystal Quest, The Cup, The Curse, Custerd's Quest, Cutthroats,

The Dallas Quest, Danger Mouse in the Black Forest Chateau Pt. 1, Davy Jones Locker, Denis through the Drinking Glass, Desert Island, Devil's Island (Gilsoft), Dodgy Geezers, Dracula, Dragon of Notacare, Dragon Slayer, DRAGON'S TOOTH, Dungeon Adventure, Dungeons, Amethysts, Alchemists 'n' everythin', Earthbound, El Dorado, Egyptian Adventure, The Eleventh Hour, Emerald Isle, Empire of Karn, Enchanter, Erik the Viking, Escape From Khoshima, Escape from Pulsar 7, Espionage Island, Eureka Prehistoric, Eureka Modern Caribbean, Eureka Roman Italy, Eureka Wartime Germany, Eureka Arthurian Britain, EVERYDAY TALE OF A SEEKER OF GOLD, Eye of Bain, Fantasia Diamond, Feasibility Experiment, Final Mission, Flook 1, Flook 2, Fool's Gold, Forest at Worlds End, The Fourth Sarcophagus, Frankie Crashed on Jupiter,

Galaxias, Gateway to Karos, Bauntlet of Meldir, Ghost Town, Giant's Adventure, The Golden Apple, The Golden Baton, The Golden Mask, Golden Voyage, Greedy Dwarf, Greedy Gulch, Green Door, Gremlins, Ground Zero, Gruds in Space, Hammer of Grimold, Hampstead, Haunted House, The Helm, The Hermitage, Heroes of Karn, Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy, The Hobbit, Hollywood Hi-Jinx, Hospital Adventure, The House of Seven Gables, The Hulk, Hunchback Part 1, Ice Station Zero, Imagination, Inca Curse, The Inferno, Infidel, The Institute, Invincible Island,

The Jade Necklace, Jason and the Golden Fleece, Jewels of Babylon, Journey to the Centre of Eddie Smith's Head, KARYSSIA, Kayleth, The Keeper, Kentilla, The Knight's Quest, Kobyashi Naru, The Labours of Hercules, L'Affaire Vera Cruz, Leather Goddesses of Phobos, Legacy, Lifeboat, Life Term, Locks of Luck, Lord of the Rings, Lords of Midnight, Lords of Time, The Lost City, The Lost Crystal, Lucifer's Realm, Ludoids,

MACBETH, Mafia Contract, Mafia Contract II, Magic Castle, Magic Mountain, Mansion Quest, Marie Celeste, Mask of the Sun, Masters of the Universe Adventure, Matchmaker, Matt Lucas, Message from Andromeda, Miami Mice, Mindshadow, Miser, Mission One:Project Volcano, Mission X, Monroe Manor, Monsters of Murdac, Mordon's Quest, Moron the Adventure, Mountains of Ket, Mural, Mutant, Mystery Funhouse, Necris Dome, Neverending Story, Nine Princes in Amber, Noah, NOVA, Nythyhel, The O Zone, Odyssey of Hope, Orbit of Doom, Orc Island, The Pawn, The Pen and the Dark, Perseus and Andromeda, Pharaoh's Tomb, Philosopher's Quest, Picture of Innocence, Pirate Adventure, Pirate Gold, Planet of Death, Planetfall, Prehistoric Adventure, The Price of Magik, Project Thesius, Project X:Microman, Prospector, Puppet Man (Larsoft), Quann Tulla, The Quest, Quest for the Holy Grail, The Quest of Merravid, Questprobe III,

Randy Warner and the Aztec Idol, Realm of Darkness, Rebel Planet, Red Moon, Rescue from Doom, Return to Eden, Return to Ithaca, RETURN OF THE JOYSTICK, RIGEL'S REVENGE, Ring of Power, Rings of Merlin, Robin of Sherlock, Robin of Sherwood, RUBY RUNAROUND, Runes of Zendos (Adventure 10), Salvage, Satcom, Savage Island Pt. 1, Savage Island Pt. 2, Scroll of Akbar Khan, Se Kaa of Assiah, Sea of Ziron, Seabase Delta, Seas of Blood, Seastalker, The Secret of Bastow Manor, The Secret of St. Brides, Secret Little Hodcombe, Secret Mission, The Shadows of Mordor, Sharpe's Deeds, Sherlock, Ship of Doom, The Shrewsbury Key, Sinbad and the Golden Ship Pts. 1 & 2, Skull Island, Snowball, Snowqueen Pt. 1, Snowqueen Pt. 2, Sorcerer, Sorcerer of Claymorgue Castle, Souls of Darkon, Special Operations, Spiderman, SpooF, Spytrek, Spy Trilogy, Starcross, STAR WRECK, STONEVILLE MANOR, Strange Odyssey, Supergran the Adventure, Suspended, The Swamp, Swiss Family Robinson,

Tass Times in Tonetown, Temple Terror, Temple of Vran, Ten Little Indians, Terrormolinos, Theatre of Death, Theseus and the Minotaur, Time of the End, The Time Machine, Time Quest, The Time Machine, Top Secret, Tower of Despair, The Tracer Sanction, Transylvania, Treasure Island, Trial of Arnold Blackwood, Ulysses and the Golden Fleece, Upper Gumtree, Urban Upstart, Valhalla, Valkyrie 17, Velnor's Lair, Very Big Cave Adventure, Volcano of Raka Tua, Voodoo Castle, VOYAGE TO ATLANTIS, Warlord, Waxworks, What's Eeyore's, Will o' the Wisp, Winter Woodland, Wise and Fool of Arnold Blackwood, Wishbringer, Witch Hunt, Wiz Biz, The Wizard of Akyrz, Wizard of Akyrz, Wizard's Orb, Wizard's Scrolls, Woods of Winter, Worm in Paradise, Zacaron Mystery, Zim Sala Bim, Zork I, Zork II, Zork III, Zzzz.

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* Not entirely true.

AMAZING MAZES
by Mandy Rodrigues

There has been a great deal of talk over the past months about the dreaded subject of Adventure Mazes. Now one thing I must point out, before I express my views on the pros and cons of mazes, is this; whether you are one of those people who absolutely hate, despise and loath them or one of those people who love the challenge of a maze and for whom an adventure wouldn't be an adventure without one, one thing is certain, if you are a keen adventurer, sooner or later you are going to be faced with one and so perhaps a few hints and tips for tackling them should come in useful at some time or other.

Mazes come in many shapes and forms. From the simpler ones of the earlier adventures to the really sophisticated ones from Software houses such as Infocom. The way that a maze is mapped is, of course, dependant on what type and what level of difficulty it is. I mentioned Infocom because their mazes seem to be dreaded most of all.

I have found that each Infocom Maze has its own particular sting or twist (excuse the pun!) which is unique to that particular adventure. The maze in Zork 1 didn't allow the player to drop items as he mapped it until the Thief had been killed off. He had the dreadful habit of following along behind you and picking things up so you became completely lost! The only way to tackle this problem is to make regular saves as you go along and proceed as follows. Map as many locations as you can until the thief begins his nasty tricks. Then next time, you must find your way quickly through the locations already mapped and start from there until he turns up again. It is time consuming but well worth the trouble if you need to tackle the maze early on in the adventure.

The maze in Zork II is much easier once you figure out the baseball diamond connection, then you can proceed southwest, southeast, northeast, northwest etc. until you get the desired result.

The maze in Zork III, the dreaded Royal Puzzle, is a totally different concept in mazes and is, in fact, quite ingenious. When you first enter the maze you find yourself enclosed on all sides but, in fact, what you have landed yourself in is a huge wide open grid of thirty odd locations with nine carefully placed mobile cubes which can be pushed around to disclose exits. All this maze needs is a little exploration until you can figure out where exactly the cubes are placed and draw a map of the grid. Then you can cut out nine squares to place over this grid and experiment on different ways of moving them about until you can manoeuvre a ladder (fixed on one of the cubes) under the hole in the location where you entered. A more detailed solution has been provided to this maze and should appear in Probe soon.

In Hollywood Hi-Jinks there is a hedge maze which, if you tried to map, would have your living room floor covered in sheets and sheets of map. Infocom themselves have been kind enough to provide a map which will appear on screen in this adventure. If you do have a printer then I suggest you use it at that point!

Other Infocom adventures are not so helpful I'm afraid and if space permits, I will cover more of them. But for now, it is only fair to give a little more space and coverage to some of the other Adventure Houses.

With some mazes such as the one in Mordon's Quest there is no help but wander around mapping until the route becomes clear as there is no way to drop objects as you go along. Thankfully this maze isn't too complex and isn't one of those that suddenly transports the player from one location to the depths of the maze if they take a wrong turning.

If the adventure you are playing happens to be one of those that can be mapped by dropping objects you are quite fortunate. But beware, some of the earlier mazes may be quite small, perhaps only six or seven locations. One trick that the programmer ususally resorts to is to make sure that the player is only able to carry up to two objects less than the locations in the maze. In this case, I always find it a good thing to make sure you explore and map the first two or three locations so that you know them like the back of your hand. Only then is it safe to proceed further and map in the usual way.

When you are exploring a maze do make sure that you read the room descriptions extremely carefully. You may be fortunate to spot a helpful difference in the wording that could easily be missed. One such maze can be found in Classic Adventure. Each location has a slight difference such as 'You are in a maze of little twisty passages' and another that says 'You are in a maze of twisty little passages' and yet another will say 'You are in a maze of little twisting passages', so it is always worth checking out just in case. It goes without saying that a maze such as this is infinitely easier to map.

I stress that care is needed in studying the location descriptions because sometimes the differences are so slight as to be easily overlooked i.e. a full stop in one location is replaced by a comma in another.

Sometimes it is a good idea to study the graphics in an adventure, (I know, I know!) as they can prove very helpful. One such maze is Carawood in Kentilla. Each of the locations depicts trees or flowers which differ in quantity or placing in each one. This of course also eliminates the necessity of dropping objects to map it. Of course the little swamp maze later on needs the more usual approach.

Do remember to try ALL exits from each location. It is extremely easy to miss one especially up and down. I was completely stuck in Goblin Towers because of neglecting to try all exits. It was only when I went back and tried 'up' in the maze that I came across the much needed rope to tie to the hook.

Some mazes can and SHOULD be avoided at all cost. One such instance is the maze in The Pawn. But how does the player know this until it is too late and he is completely and utterly lost in a maze that is unmappable? The answer in the case of The Pawn is to read all signs carefully.

In this case you will be told in an election poster, earlier in the game, that Mazes are completely irrelevant and should be banned. You are even warned that you are now entering an irrelevant maze! I ignored both warnings, probably thinking that they were trying to put me off because there was something hidden in there that they didn't want me to find! Not so, as I learned to my cost!

Level 9 adventures do contain mazes but, because at first they are not too obvious it may come as a surprise to find yourself lost. Some of their adventures don't have a large maze but loads of sneaky ones! In every case, thank goodness, a little object dropping should do the trick. Don't think it can be done in one go though because there is usually a snag involved i.e. limited moves before you die of thirst in a desert maze or being chased by orcs through a bleak moor maze and, one of the worst, having to use half your concentration in fending off an assortment of monsters which grab you as you pass by, then needing various swipes of your sword to get rid of them, then finding you have now become confused and don't know exactly where you were up to and need to start all over again.

So, remember, whether you are dying of hunger, slowly freezing to death, being chased by any number of nasties do try to ignore them as far as possible. The whole thing is deliberately set up to make you feel threatened and so rush your way through. Don't!

Do you know that, after having mapped loads and loads of mazes of all kinds and levels of difficulty, there is only one very simple thing that gets right up my nose! It's when I go east to find myself in a dead end and then finding that I need to go south instead of west to get out again! Boy! Isn't it amazing (sorry about the pun!) how simple things can really annoy you?

Should you stumble into a maze which you find has no floors here and there such as in the Glass Maze in Sorcerer then the golden rule is to leave it alone for the time being. Further exploration is required because you are sure to come across some form of device or spell which will enable you to fly.

Just remember one small thing. No matter what kind of maze you may come across, if you try hard enough you will ALWAYS find your way through in the end!

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A FESTIVE TAIL
by Pete Gerrard

It had been some while since my last encounter with Strombrigner the Grey and Dimli Gloing, legendary wizard and dwarf of immense thirst respectively. They had, as I recall, just returned from a journey of tremendous difficulty and danger in a set of underground caves, and their tales had filled me with fear and loathing. It was not without a certain sense of trepidation that, in early December, I had watched them disappear off on a mission that Strombrigner himself had described as "possibly our most troublesome to date". On the other hand, I was not sorry to see them go. Getting saddled with a wizard and a dwarf for company can quite cramp your style of an evening.

However, the festive season does wonders to restore one's feelings for one's fellow man (or wizard, or dwarf), and so on Christmas Eve I was quite happy to see them both come walking into The Shepherds Arms, a Wigan pub that I had recently taken to favouring. They marched in with their usual devil-may-care attitude.

"Good morrow master Peter, are you well?" said Strombrigner, smiling broadly.

"Bloody 'ell" said Jerry, a large Irish inhabitant of the pub, dropping his pool cue.

"Allow me." Strombrigner stared at the pool cue for a second, and before Jerry's startled gaze it raised itself off the floor and deposited itself back in Jerry's hand. "Seven ball corner pocket is your best shot" continued the wizard before turning his attention back to the matter in hand, leaving Jerry staring suspiciously at the beer he had just consumed.

"I'm very well." Belatedly answering the wizard's question I also spoke to the landlord of the pub, who was happily serving behind the bar. "Er, three pints of bitter please, Bob. Use this for one of them." I had drained my pint at the shock of seeing Strombrigner perform something other than his usual magic, and handed over the empty glass.

"Three, Pete?" said Bob, quizzically eyeing my companions.

"Oh yes" I replied, as cheerfully as I could, "three pints. They're all right" I added in a whisper, "old acquaintances."

Bob seemed doubtful, but accepted my explanation nonetheless. "If you say so." He poured out the beer and brought it over to me, depositing the three glasses on the bar.

As both the wizard and the dwarf seemed reluctant to hand over any money I, as usual, paid for all three drinks and ushered them into a side room away from the main bar and the still bemused Jerry. Here there was plenty of room to sit down and so we did, alarming a courting couple in the other corner of the room whilst doing so.

Strombrigner bestowed his fondest smile upon them, and seeing me they relaxed and went back to each other.

Dimli supped mightily at his beer, Strombrigner took a more leisurely sip, a sure sign that there was a tale of brave deeds in the offing, and anticipating his next move I silently handed him a cigarette. This he took with his usual aplomb before removing the paper and carefully stuffing the tobacco into the bowl of the pipe that had appeared from nowhere. He breathed in heartily and the tobacco came to life, smoke began drifting gently around the room, and three rings bound themselves intricately together above our heads.

I was gazing at this piece of artistry when the wizard brought my attention back to other matters. "Master Peter" he said kindly, "I hear that you have been recording some of our deeds in one of the local journals? No, no" he continued, stalling my protests, "I do not wish to complain, indeed" and here he smiled complacently, "they are rather good in the telling, are they not? Who is the owner of this journal?"

I told him.

"Sharkey, eh?" mused the wizard, "a name I have encountered before in rather unpleasant circumstances. No relation I trust?"

I assured him that Sandra was indeed no relation to the Sharkey of whom he spoke.

"Ah, that is good. Perhaps you would be kind enough to arrange a meeting for us sometime? It would be, er, interesting."

I imagined Sandra's delight at actually meeting Strombrigner and Dimli, having heard so much about them, and informed the wizard that I would do my best to sort out a meeting as soon as possible.

"Good" he said. "But now", he hastened on, dismissing the topic, "we have just returned from an extremely difficult time, have we not Dimli?"

"Grunt", grunted the dwarf, indicating assent.

"Yes, well, we have anyway." The wizard seemed embarrassed by the dwarf's lack of commitment, but carried on regardless. "We were on the high moors not far from here, on a mission of some importance, when by chance we called in at a local tavern. A wild and remote place."

"Tan Hill?" I asked.

"No, er, Rochdale, I think. Anyway," he raved on, "we were partaking of refreshment when Dimli happened to notice the most unusual thing above the fireplace. It was a dog's tail, encased in glass, with a blank plaque beneath it. What do you make of that?"

Dimli made an empty glass, I simply said "you made enquiries I take it?"

"Indeed, indeed" said Strombrigner, and then, noticing the dwarf's empty glass, got up with a sigh and said "excuse me, Peter, I am just going to prevent an argument." So saying he headed off towards the bar. In a little while he had reappeared bearing three pints, with a smile on his face. "Charming wench" he said, sitting down, "simply charming."

I knew instantly of whom he was speaking. "That's the landlord's daughter" I said, hoping to curb his enthusiasm, "and she's going out with one of the lads on the pool table."

"Oh, fie!" exclaimed the wizard, "I'm 800 years older than her if I'm a day. Now where was I? Oh yes. I naturally enough asked the landlord of the tavern the nature of the tail, and he told me the most alarming story. Apparently" and at this his voice dropped to a whisper, making me crane forward to hear him, "it was the tail of a hellhound, a ferocious beast capable of devouring a human being 12 times its size in three and a half seconds."

"I think I've met one" I mused, recalling the description from somewhere.

"You did well to survive" said the startled wizard, before lowering his voice and continuing his story. "The hellhound was supposed to return on the very night that we were in the tavern! Five days before Christmas! It was to appear at midnight, demanding its tail, which had been maliciously chopped off by the ghost of a former landlord. The hound, naturally, died instantly, but its ghost was said to haunt the building, and at midnight, on that night, it was to return to recover its tail."

"Astounding" I whispered, not liking the twinkle that had begun to appear in Strombrigner's eye.

"Indeed, master Peter, indeed. Dimli and I were understandably alarmed, but as the evening progressed I began to see an inkling of a way out. A plan was beginning to form."

"Thought it might."

"We waited" continued the wizard impatiently, "and on the stroke of midnight there was a sudden chill in the air, the temperature dropped, there was a swirling wind, and there, before our startled eyes, was the hellhound itself, a ghost with terrible, slavering jaws. The landlord cowered behind the bar, Dimli and I remained where we were, and in a timorous voice the landlord said 'what do you want'. The hellhound snarled and growled, and in a voice the like of which I have never heard before, roared 'give me my tail'. It turned to me and bellowed 'and you can make me a complete hellhound again!' My mind raced."

"As would anybody's" I said, in awed tones.

"Don't interrupt. Fortunately, I had an idea, it might just work, and do you know, it did."

CHATTING WITH THE WARLOCKS!

A short series of interviews with some of the best of the small adventure software houses.

No. 2 in a set of 4: TOM FROST TARTAN SOFTWARE.

TOM FROST earns his living as a quality control chemist. He is 50 years old, married, with one daughter (Clare, aged 14). He is the power behind TARTAN SOFTWARE, an adventure writer par excellence, an adventure-solver extraordinaire, and a provider of help to stuck players since long before it became the popular thing to do! For his computing, he uses a "very battered", rubber-keyed 48k Spectrum. But before that, he had a ZX81 ...

TOM: It was 1983. The company I was working for at the time decided to install a computer to handle the storage, retrieval and analysis of quality control data. In order to prove the practicality of the concept, a pilot scheme was initially introduced using a ZX81. So that the staff could familiarise themselves with the machine, the company provided some magazines with listings in, and some games tapes. After we'd typed in the listings, we discovered that we'd made mistakes, and it then became a matter of honour to find the errors and correct them. The only thing I can remember about the games tapes is that one of them was a flight simulator of some kind. However, despite all this "familiarisation", I still had very little interest in either computers or computing.

Then my boss (from the company headquarters in Hertford) turned up to see what progress was being made, and he suggested that we get hold of an adventure-type game. Shortly after that, I got to play my very first adventure ... INCA CURSE! That was me then ... well and truly hooked ... and I've never got over it. A few weeks after that, I bought myself a ZX81 for home use (and a 16k Rampack to go with it).

PROBE: Was it then that you began to learn BASIC programming?

TOM: Well, after I had played a few adventures on the ZX81, I got very curious as to how the computer managed to recognise the typed-in commands and then respond to them. I came across an adventure-core program and generator listing in a copy of YOUR COMPUTER, and I learned a bit from dabbling with that. However, I only really began to learn BASIC after I had acquired a Spectrum, and bought Pete Gerrard's book "EXPLORING ADVENTURES ON THE SPECTRUM". I adapted some of the ideas I found in there, but the structure of 1942 MISSION came mainly from that book ... which can't be bad because 1942 MISSION turned out to be the first adventure I ever had published, won a prize in a national competition, got promoted by C.C.S., and remains one of my most successful titles to date!

PROBE: But that wasn't the first adventure you ever wrote?

TOM: No. The first adventure I ever wrote was called MAGIC TREASURE, and I did it on the ZX81. Later on, I converted it to the Spectrum and it became the first

adventure I ever offered for sale. At the time, I thought that it was quite good. However, looking back on it now, it was very slow in execution because it was written wholly in BASIC, it had no SAVE/RESTORE facility at all, and the location descriptions were just a few words, so it was seriously lacking in atmosphere:

PROBE: So you moved on to machine code?

TOM: Not quite. My next adventure was SPY TRILOGY and, once again, it was written entirely in BASIC. Unfortunately for me, when it was ready for release, a whole flood of Quilled adventures also came on to the market for the first time. In comparison with these Quilled games, the slow response time of BASIC made this first version of SPY TRILOGY totally unacceptable in the marketplace. I decided that there was nothing else for it but to learn sufficient machine code to enable me to speed up the slow portions of a BASIC program.

I must admit that I found learning machine code to be very difficult. I started by trying to understand simple, short routines printed in magazines. But the bulk of the learning was done from Toni Baker's book "MASTERING MACHINE CODE ON YOUR ZX SPECTRUM". I think that anyone attempting to learn machine code would be well advised not to master BASIC first ... I did, and it tends to get in the way of your thinking. Apart from that, you need a good book to refer to and some patience! There's no point in being too ambitious, especially at the start. Even now, I wouldn't consider myself to be an expert machine code programmer ... but I get by!

PROBE: Wouldn't it have been easier to have just used the Quill yourself?

TOM: Not really. You see, my main enjoyment in writing programs comes from manipulating the computer ... getting it to do what I want it to do, in the way that I want it to do it! So my initial reaction to the Quill was to avoid it, as I felt using it would rob me of some of that freedom to manipulate which I so cherished.

However, I have now come to realise that the use of a utility need not be limiting at all ... you could consider the utility to be a type of computer ROM, containing routines which are there to be manipulated by the writer as he sees fit. Fergus McNeill and Pete Torrance have shown what can be achieved ... but it takes time, effort and a lot of thought if you are to produce something which is representative of the capabilities of the utility. It is awfully easy to produce a mediocre game using a utility ... and I think that the fault for the glut of Quilled games

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*                                     *
*          THE TARTAN RANGE          *
*                                     *
* 1. 1942 MISSION                    *
*     Published by Case               *
*     Computer Simulations           *
*     at £5.95                       *
*                                     *
* 2. SPY TRILOGY                     *
*     To be published by             *
*     Anco Software on their         *
*     Midas label. Price and        *
*     release date not known        *
*     at this time.                 *
*                                     *
* 3. THE ADVENTURE BUILDER           *
*     SYSTEM                         *
*     Published by CRL on            *
*     the Power House label         *
*     as one half of a              *
*     package entitled "How         *
*     To Get The Most Out Of       *
*     Your Computer". The           *
*     other half being an           *
*     art utility which is          *
*     not compatible with           *
*     the A.B.S.                    *
*     Price £9.95                   *
*                                     *
* These are original Tom            *
* Frost products which are          *
* now available only from           *
* the third party publishers       *
* listed above.                     *
*                                     *
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(most of them bad) which flooded the market just a few years ago, lies not with the utility, nor even with the writers of the games themselves, but with the publishers who inflicted on the consumer a mass of software which should never really have seen the light of day!

PROBE: So, having decided that the Quill was not for you, you set about developing the Adventure Builder System?

TOM: Once again, not really. It wasn't that simple. I wrote some machine code routines to incorporate into SPY TRILOGY in order to speed it up. I really had no intention of writing a utility! Eventually, as I developed the routines, I combined them into one program on one tape, just to make it easier for me to use. It only became a "utility" proper when I tidied it up a bit, wrote a demonstration adventure, and submitted it to Sinclair User as a listing about two years ago. Following that publication, I continued to develop it ... adding new features and including a Graphics Aid ... before submitting it to software houses for publication. Eventually, CRL took it up and have put it out on their Power House label. Now and again, I will get a telephone call from someone seeking a bit of advice on how to tackle a particular problem using it. However, I have yet to see any finished adventures created with it ... but I assume there must be some!

PROBE: And, somewhere amongst all this other activity, TARTAN SOFTWARE put in an appearance.

TOM: The decision to launch TARTAN stemmed mainly from the refusal of other companies to publish my work when I considered that it was good enough for publication ... and I think that the reviews given to TARTAN's programs have vindicated that view, and the decision to go it alone.

PROBE: Was it your intention from the start to publish other people on the TARTAN label as well as yourself?

TOM: Not at all! I originally met Gladys Officer when she wrote to me for help during the KET TRILOGY days, and a correspondence concerning other adventures followed. Some time later, she sent me a copy of SHIPWRECK, which she and Gerry had written, and asked for my comments (purely as a fellow player ... TARTAN didn't exist at that time). This was their first attempt at a Quilled game, and that first version was very different from the one we eventually published. After this, they continued to write adventures, but had little luck in getting them published. The one exception was the first version of PROSPECTOR, which was put out on the Central Solutions label. However, the proprietor, Steven Lambert, promptly ran off with all the proceeds ... so they never got a penny for that!

When TARTAN began to become a little better known, we decided it would be a good idea if I published some of their work. So I did.

A similar situation occurred with Audrey Meredith in Ireland. She wrote to me for help with EUREKA, and then, later, offered the program which was to become YELLOW DOOR (on the SIX-IN-ONE compilation) for publication ... then, later still, she contributed the outline stories for GREEN DOOR and RED DOOR (also on the SIX-IN-ONE compilation).

So, you see, the involvement of other people in TARTAN just kind of happened! To be honest though, I have no plans to publish any more authors (although I've had several unsolicited programs submitted in recent months), simply because I

don't want the operation to get any bigger than it is at present ... otherwise I may have to spend more time running it than actually programming!

PROBE: As you've already indicated, the critical reaction to TARTAN's releases, both in the glossy monthly publications and in the more specialist fanzine press, has been very good indeed. Has this been reflected in the actual sales of the games?

TOM: Well, let me say straight off that response to advertising and reviews in magazines like PROBE has been very poor indeed! One would have thought that, as the people who subscribe to adventure fanzines are all avid adventurers, the effect of advertising would be that much greater. Sadly, it's not! I put a full page advert in INSIGHT a few months ago ... and it generated just two replies! On top of that, I actually gave INSIGHT permission to give away copies of a game called ESCAPE to anyone who wanted one ... and, out of 120 Spectrum-owning subscribers to that magazine, only six requested a copy! So, although any exposure at all is invaluable to the small software house, fanzines cannot be considered to be as important as one might have first assumed.

That leaves the commercial computer press ... and getting them to take your products seriously can be very difficult. This was one of the reasons why Tony Bridge was so important to the small producer. Very often, the first exposure (if not only exposure) any of us got, was in his column. In fact, SPY TRILOGY sold reasonably well purely because of good reviews by Tony Bridge and Derek Brewster ... it wasn't promoted in any other way! Of course, Tony has gone now and he will be sorely missed, so that avenue of exposure is now closed for good. POPULAR COMPUTING has decided to follow a different path ... I no longer buy it.

Fortunately for me, TARTAN is better known now, and its programs are more widely reviewed than before, and I certainly can't complain about the content or the number of reviews which have appeared. Almost without exception, the programs have been rated as good to excellent, and, without any real advertising to back the reviews up (who can afford those rates?), this is certainly reflected in the sales!

PROBE: Looking forward now ... what does Tartan Software have in store for the future?

TOM: The next release, which will probably be available before this interview actually gets into print, will be another double adventure tape by Gladys and

- *****
* THE TARTAN RANGE *
* ***** *
* 4. PRINCE OF TYNDAL *
* A fantasy graphic *
* adventure *
* Price £1.95 *
* 5. SHIPWRECK/CASTLE EERIE *
* A double adventure pack *
* 6. SIX-IN-ONE *
* A compilation of six *
* adventures of varying *
* degrees of difficulty. *
* Ideal for novices. *
* Price £4.95 *
* 7. TWO-IN-ONE *
* A double adventure pack *
* containing the two *
* toughest adventures *
* from the SIX-IN-ONE *
* compilation (i.e. RED *
* DOOR and GREEN DOOR). *
* Definitely for the more *
* experienced adventurer. *
* Price £1.95 *
* 8. CROWN OF RAMHOTEP and *
* PROSPECTOR *
* Another double adventure *
* pack from the writers of *
* SHIPWRECK and CASTLE *
* EERIE. *
* Price £2.95 *
* All of the above titles *
* are available by mail *
* order only direct from *
* TARTAN SOFTWARE. *
* ***** *

Gerry Officer. The titles will be CROWN OF RAMHOTEP and PROSPECTOR. PROSPECTOR is an improved version of the game which was originally published by Central Solutions under the same title. We've revamped it considerably, and it is now much better.

After that, the next release will probably be FOUR MORE DOORS which will consist of story outlines by Audrey Meredith, programmed by me ... with, possibly, one title being all my own work ... if I can work out a suitable ending for it!!

I'm fairly fond of adventures which act as competitions and offer prizes to the first person to complete them ... especially if the prize is around about £500. In this respect, EUREKA was a little over the top, but the KET TRILOGY and the current WRIGHTCHOICE series seem about right. In fact, I'm considering producing just such a game myself. It would be in three parts ... all parts to be successfully completed in order to win the prize ... the first two parts would be published on one tape at £3.95 if you wanted to try for the prize (and £2.95 if you didn't), and then the third part would be published about six months later at £2.95! The idea is only at the thinking-stage at the moment, but I really feel like doing it.

Other plans are a little vague ... I may buy a Spectrum +3 and start using PAW ... then again, I may not ... I may decide to upgrade my own adventure system to a more sophisticated level than its current verb/noun format ... then again, I may not!! Confusing isn't it? We'll just have to see what happens as time goes by!

PROBE: We can't really finish without mentioning your role as dispenser of help to stuck adventurers everywhere. Can you tell us a little about that side of your activities?

TOM: Well, I still get requests for help of course. They are usually more numerous from September to March, probably because people spend longer indoors with the computer during the winter months! Apart from the KET TRILOGY and EUREKA in their heyday, there is no real pattern to the requests ... they can be, and often are, for any old adventure at all! In fact, I still get pleas for assistance in KET and EUREKA themselves! I suppose the largest volume of mail for any one adventure over the years must be for EUREKA ... hardly suprising that it was so popular when you consider what was at stake! All requests for all adventures must run well into 4 figures by now ... and I'm pleased to say that, to date, every single one of them has been accompanied by a stamped-addressed envelope!

PROBE: Thanks very much, Tom ... and best of luck for the future!

Jim O'Keefe

TARTAN SOFTWARE, 61 Bailie Norrie Crescent, Montrose, Angus, Scotland, DD10 9DT.

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GETTING YOU STARTEDCROWN OF RAMHOTEP - Tartan Software - Spectrum - J. R.

TAKE CHOCOLATE, TAKE BOX, EXAMINE BOX, WEST, DOWN, WEST, SOUTH, WEST, SHOW SCROLL (the curator gives you an amulet), INVENTORY (shows you that the amulet has a gold chain, which you must sell to obtain money - but you need to wear the amulet!), EAST, SOUTH, WEST, UP, REMOVE CHAIN (from the amulet), TAKE STRING, THREAD AMULET (with the string), WEAR AMULET, DOWN, EAST, NORTH, NORTH, NORTH, WEST, SELL CHAIN, EAST, NORTH, EAST, BUY LAMP, BUY ROPE, BUY MATCHES, WEST, SOUTH, SOUTH, EAST, PAY MANAGER (you should feel hungry about now so EAT chocolate), TAKE CASE, OPEN CASE, LOOK, TAKE KEY, WEST, SOUTH, EAST, ENTER CAR, INSERT KEY, WEST, SOUTH, SOUTH, WEST (Ignore the boy and his beads!), NORTH, NORTH, STOP ENGINE, LEAVE CAR, BUY PETROL....

DRAGON'S CRYPT - Venom Software - Spectrum - J. R.

WEST, TAKE STICK, SOUTH, TAKE TROWEL, NORTH, EAST, SOUTH, SOUTHWEST, TAKE QUILL, EXAMINE QUILL, NORTHEAST, EAST, TAKE CRUCIFIX, SOUTH, WAVE STICK (the rubble parts), TAKE AXE, NORTHWEST, NORTH, WEST, NORTH, WEST, NORTHWEST, NORTHEAST, THROW AXE (to kill creature), ENTER TREE, TAKE BREAD, LEAVE TREE, SOUTHWEST, SOUTHEAST, WEST, WEST, SOUTH, GIVE BREAD (the parrot says "SNAKIVOR"), NORTH, NORTH, SAY SNAKIVOR (a block of salt appears), TAKE SALT, SOUTH, EAST, EAST, EAST, NORTHEAST, DIG SAND, TAKE CANTEEN, NORTHWEST, TAKE CHALK, SOUTHEAST, SOUTHWEST, SOUTH, EAST, NORTHEAST, WATER PLANT, TAKE SEED-

ADVENTURE 100 - Hyperion Software - Spectrum - J. R.

EAST, EAST, EAST, EAST, EAST, SOUTH, TAKE MACHETE, NORTH, WEST, WEST, WEST, WEST, WEST, SOUTH, SOUTH, USE MACHETE (to create an exit to the south), DROP MACHETE, SOUTH, SOUTH, SOUTH, EAST, NORTH, EAST, TAKE INSECT KILLER, SOUTH, SOUTH, WEST, NORTH, WEST, SOUTH, SOUTH, EAST, SOUTH, SOUTH, EAST, TAKE BOTTLE, NORTH, NORTH, EAST, EAST, TAKE SERUM, SOUTH, WEST, NORTH, NORTH, NORTH, EAST, TAKE KEY, WEST, NORTH (bitten by a snake!), USE SERUM, EAST, NORTH, TAKE FOOD, WEST, NORTH, WEST, WEST (a colony of soldier ants now approach you!), USE INSECT KILLER, NORTH, NORTH, EAST, FILL BOTTLE

MOONMIST - Infocom - Commodore - J. R.

RED VARIATION:

EXAMINE GATE, PRESS EYE (type in your name), YES, RED, YES, SOUTH, YES, YES, ASK TAMARA ABOUT GHOST, SOUTH, ASK JACK ABOUT GHOST, WAIT, ASK HYDE ABOUT GHOST, ASK VIVIEN ABOUT GHOST, WAIT, NO, YES, ASK IRIS ABOUT GHOST, EAST, OPEN LUGGAGE, GET DINNER OUTFIT, PUT LUGGAGE IN WARDROBE, ASK BOLITHO ABOUT GHOST, YES, YES, YES, PUT TWEED IN WARDROBE, DROP ALL, NORTH, TAKE BATH, SOUTH, GET ALL FROM WING CHAIR, WEAR DINNER OUTFIT, GO TO NEW GREAT HALL, EAST, EXAMINE CARPET, YES, GET JEWEL, WEST, GO TO KITCHEN, GET LANTERN, UP, EAST, EXAMINE JEWEL, WAIT, YES, YES, YES, YES, YES, YES, WAIT, EXAMINE BUST, WAIT (three times), LOOK UNDER PUNCHBOWL, READ CLUE, VIVIAN, GIVE ME SECOND CLUE, READ IT, LIGHT LANTERN, GO TO CHAPEL, EXAMINE WINDOW, GET THIRD CLUE, READ IT, GO TO COURTYARD, EAST, EAST, EXAMINE GARDEN, GET FOURTH CLUE, READ IT.....

HINTS

RED DOOR

- a) You will find the obvious and the usual in the haystack!
- b) To find a coin, feed a cow.
- c) Open the case to meet another Mummy (carry the rod!)
- d) Wave the rod to turn the token into gold, then INSERT it.
- e) Give the scroll to the Soothsayer (sic!) for a useful item and precise advice.
- f) The key will help you find a bracelet.

WHITE DOOR

- a) Don't drink the sherry as the children smell your breath.
- b) You must be dressed as Santa to enter the bedrooms.
- c) The ottoman must be empty and NOTHING ELSE can be carried at the same time!
- d) Boy's gift is 'downwards', girl's gift is 'upwards' (clues from reading the diary).
- e) Take the towel to find a drawer which can be opened.
- f) A beard can often be mistaken for a shaving item!

GROUND ZERO

- a) The wire cutters are in the saddlebag - it doesn't take long for the fence to be repaired!
- b) Examine the traffic lights for a safe journey.
- c) The queue are more interested in money than bread!
- d) The shopkeeper doesn't know that the radio needs a battery!
- e) At the metal door, tell them you are someone important, i.e. 'THE MAYOR', 'PRIME MINISTER', etc.
- f) The bread must be sliced, with the knife, to make it last.

MOLESWORTH

- a) You'll find some money if you search your clothes.
- b) Petrol can be found due east of your starting location.
- c) Buy an axe from the village shop in Ellington, but remember that the shop closes early!
- d) Purchase matches and a newspaper in Catworth.
- e) Catch a piranha fish with the net.
- f) Any objects stolen by the Gnome, will be found in the burrow.
- g) Shoot the lock (with rifle and bullet) on the iron gate.

BOOK OF THE DEAD

- a) After breaking your egg, shear the sheep (with knife) for a fleece, then wash the fleece at the lake and leave it to dry (approx. 15 moves).
- b) You cannot get the boulder until you have lifted the weights first.
- c) Shoot the mangonet at the bird, after loading it with the boulder. The bird carries an ankh in its beak.
- d) Pluck the bird (an IBIS) to get quill.
- e) Throw all your items over the cliff before going down (or rope will snap), (PULL/TUG rope after and GET it).
- f) Dry the Hermit with the fleece to obtain a scroll.

.....

Part 3

Now where would I find another treasure? Suddenly I remembered the painting I had seen hanging on the wall just outside the parlour. That must be another treasure! I hurried to it and tried to remove it from the wall but failed miserably. The thing just wouldn't come down. I tugged at it and nearly fell over when it suddenly swung out from the wall revealing a wall safe set into the wall behind it! I spun the dial this way and that, frantically trying to open the blessed thing when I suddenly remembered the statues! Of course, they held the combination.

I tried turning the dial to the right to 3 then to the left to 7 and back to the right to 5 and was rewarded by hearing a satisfying click from the safe. I was extremely disappointed to find that it only contained a grater! I had expected diamonds at least. But, as it had been locked in the safe I concluded that it must be my fourth treasure! Taking the grater and the green punch card which fluttered to the ground, I returned to the living room in glee and deposited the grater with my mounting pile of treasures.

I wandered back to the foyer and suddenly noticed a closet which I hadn't bothered to explore before. Opening it I stepped inside and looked around. A pair of skis lay here and, strangely enough, a rusty bucket hung from one of the three pegs in the far wall. There obviously should have been five pegs at one time because there was an empty peg hole at one end and the last peg had been sawn off flush to the wall. This must mean something. I examined the pegs closely and, as I removed the bucket from the second peg, I accidentally pulled the third peg. The closet began to move! I was standing in a lift!

When it stopped I got out and found myself on the upper landing. Beside me was a horrible newel which was surmounted by an ugly head. I turned it round because I didn't want that thing staring at me and immediately heard a click from the stairs. When I tested the staircase I found that it no longer flattened out. Great! I hated using lifts.

I walked to the east end of the landing and immediately noticed the velvet sack suspended from the outside of the landing window. If I opened the window to reach it, it would fall. Luckily I noticed that a bit of the sack was visible under the window so, holding this, I opened the window and retrieved the sack. Inside it was my fifth treasure The Maltese Finch!

I searched the two rooms at the east side of the house but could find nothing of interest me apart from the handles Uncle had placed in the floor of one room for the use of drunken guests. The other room reminded me only too well of my terrible stays in it when I had to share the room with horrible cousin Herman. Yeuch!

I hurried westwards to explore the other side of the landing. In the bathroom I did find something lying on the floor - the bath mat! Taking it I also discovered a red punch card to add to my growing collection.

I walked downstairs and back to the living room where I was storing the treasures and added the finch and dropped the mat. Wandering north into the dining room I picked up a thin piece of paper and laid it on top of the yellow one. Now the strange markings on both the papers made sense. This was the map of the hedge maze! Thinking of that dreaded maze gave me the shudders and I heartily prayed that I wouldn't have to go in there looking for things.

I went west into the kitchen and collected the matchbox which was lying beside the sink and descended the narrow stairs to the cellar. Here Uncle had always stored his huge computer prop. Yes, it was still here. I opened the closet door and, as the lift was on an upper floor, felt safe enough to step into the lift well. I was glad I did because lying on the floor I discovered a blue punch card. 'My goodness' I thought, 'This is getting to be quite a rainbow'. Then I examined the cards again and saw that, indeed, I had all the colours of the rainbow except one. I just needed an orange one to complete the set.

Going back to the foyer I tried to think of any other rooms in the house I hadn't visited but realised that, now I had better turn my attention to the grounds. I went north to the games room and north out on to the patio. No sooner did I see the orange punch card lying on the ground did I grab it and race back inside the house and back down to the cellar. You see, I had had an idea and couldn't wait to try it out. I turned on the computer and regarded the rows of flashing lights. Yes, this must be it. I inserted the red card in the slot and the first row of lights changed. Right, I was on the right track. I inserted the rest of the cards in the order of the colours of the rainbow - orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet - and pow! There before me was a number written with lights 576 - 3190. That looks like a phone number! I literally raced up the stairs to the telephone and dialled the number. Almost immediately I heard the recorded voice of Aunt Hildegarde telling me to look in the hopper of the computer. I hung up feeling puzzled. I had already checked inside the hopper and had found nothing. Oh well, I had better go down and take another peep. I am glad I did because a few moments later I was back in the living room laying my sixth treasure carefully on the sofa, Uncle's moth-eaten toupee!

Now I was stuck! I decided that I would just take a quick look around once more, just in case I had missed something, before I ventured outside to explore. I knew I was trying to put off the moment of exploring the maze for as long as possible but ... well, we all have our little pet hates don't we?

When I reached the top of the stairs I noticed something I had missed before! In the ceiling was a closed hatch, way out of reach. Now this was going to be a problem, the third peg had been sawn off so how on earth would I be able to operate the lift to the top attic floor? I entered the closet and descended to the ground floor and considered my problem. How exactly had I found the lift when I first entered it? There had been the skis on the floor and ... yes of course, the bucket on the peg. If I could somehow get the lift to operate on its own when I was standing on the roof of it I could be lifted up to the top floor with no problem at all ... but how? (to be continued)

OBJECTS AND THEIR USES

ESCAPE FROM KHOSHIMA	-	Graham Wheeler
Knife	-	To cut vines
Cigarettes	-	Give to soldier for a key.
Key	-	Unlocks medical box.
Can or Pitch	-	Makes wood burn.
Wood	-	Dip it in pitch to make a torch.
Bottle Ether	-	Pour in hole at altar to kill scorpions.
Meat	-	Throw to dogs.
Lighter	-	To light wood.
Stone	-	Place in indentation on altar.
Stick	-	Use it to trap snake.
Pot	-	To get ants.
Cork	-	To seal pot.
Ants	-	Give them to native for spear.
Log	-	To cross pit.
Rushes	-	Weave a mat with them to cross quicksand.
Vines	-	Tie to spear.
Spear	-	Throw to cross ravine.
FANTASIA DIAMOND	-	Graham Wheeler
Fishing rod	-	To catch a fish and use as weapon.
Wine glass	-	Drink wine for energy and rub glass to break window.
All food	-	For energy (sandwiches etc.)
Small key	-	Unlock prison (dungeon), and unlock trap door in ceiling in cave complex.
Rusty key	-	Unlock strong chest.
Silver key	-	Unlock rusty door.
Battery	-	Insert into toy robot.
Robot	-	Opens manhole.
Green box	-	Music book for conductor and any book will help to smash trap door.
Violin	-	Give to violinist.
Baton	-	Give to conductor.
Gun	-	To kill Guardian (either get Boris to give it to you, or get Boris to kill Guardian).
Boat	-	To cross back over river.
VERY BIG CAVE ADVENTURE (PT.2)	-	Graham Wheeler
Broken plate	-	Toll to open gate at construction site.
Record	-	Used with 'Fee Fie Foe Foom' to blow up Hairy Figure by Bridge.
Rod	-	Wave to re-make bridge.
Bottle	-	Water plant twice and water sledgehammer.
Food	-	To kill pirate.
Chest	-	Contains a ferret to kill wombat.
Repair kit	-	To varnish dresser (do this in Wellie Hut).
Golden key	-	Opens little door to Rabbit Garden.
Glove	-	Protects hand from file.
Utility belt	-	Dial file, to get glass table, dial sledge hammer to break door, dial bicarbonate for Giant's indigestion, dial paraquat for weed killer to kill plant.
Treasures	-	Glass table, decanter, snuff box, ming vase, pearl, diamond, emerald, eggs, golden chain, platinum brick.

SPELLBREAKER HINT - Mandy Rodrigues

Many people are experiencing difficulties in the Outer vault in Spellbreaker. As they try to find the correct 'X' cube to 'Blorple'. As the cube is chosen at random each time the vault is entered and the player has limited time to discover which one it is the following solution to the problem will assist.

First make sure that all items are safely in the zipper because you will need your hands free. Learn three Jindak spells and one Blorple spell and before you Rezrov the inner vault door SAVE because you will not be able to save your position once through the door. On no account must you take the treasure from the inner vault!

NOTE ONE

Take x1, x2, x7 and x8, Jindak and make a note of which pile glows brighter or if they glow equally.

If both piles glow evenly then proceed with Note 2.

If the piles glow unevenly then proceed to Note 5.

NOTE TWO

Take x3 and x4. Put x1 and x2 on first pile. Jindak and make a note of which pile glows brighter or if they glow equally.

If the piles glow evenly then proceed with Note 3.

If the piles glow unevenly then proceed with Note 4.

NOTE THREE

Take x1. Put x7 on first pile. Jindak and make a note as above.

If the piles are glowing evenly then Blorple x8.

If they glow unevenly then take x7 and Blorple it.

NOTE FIVE

Put x1, x2 and x7 on second pile. Take x9, x10, x11 and x12. Jindak and make the usual note on the glows.

If the piles glow with an even brightness proceed with Note 6.

If the piles are uneven as they were in note 1, proceed with Note 7.

If the piles are uneven but different to note 1, proceed with Note 8.

NOTE SIX

Take all cubes from both piles. Put x10 on first pile, x4 on second pile, Jindak and make the usual note.

If the piles are even then take x12 and Blorple it.

If uneven but different from note 1, get x10 and Blorple it.

NOTE SEVEN

Take all cubes from both piles. Put x3 on first pile, x4 on second pile. Jindak and make the usual note.

If the piles are even take x5 and Blorple it.

If the piles are uneven as in Note 1, take x3 then Blorple it.

If the piles are uneven but not as in Note 1. Take x4, Blorple it.

NOTE EIGHT

Take all the cubes from both piles. Put x6 on first pile, x1 on second pile. Jindak and note the difference.

If the piles are glowing evenly then Blorple x9.

If the piles are uneven (doesn't matter how) Blorple x6.

CENTRE STAGE
by Mandy Rodrigues

Enter adventurer to centre stage)

s this an Adventure which I see before me, the package clutched in
y hand? Come, let me clutch thee - I have thee not, and yet I see
hee still.

rt thou not, fatal adventure, unsolvable to keep me awake at night?
or art thou but a danger to the mind, a great creation, proceeding
rom someone's heat-oppressed brain?
see thee yet, in package as unopened as this

(Points at another one on the shelf)

which I now discard.

Thou marshallst me the way that I was going, to such a computer I
want to use. My brain will be made the fool of other's senses if it's
not as good as all the rest.

I see thee still, and on thy label says 'Dungeons full of blood',
like none seen before.

There's no such thing - 'tis the software business which informs thus
to mine eyes.

(Moves to stage right)

Now o'er all my screen, the rest of the world seems dead, and wicked
problems abuse the curtained sleep.

(Enter rest of family stage left)

The computer celebrates my adventure offering, and the rest of the
family mutter dark threats of murder as they, alarmed by this sight.
The Husband, who howls when he looks at his watch, thus with stealthy
pace - and stomach growling strides - towards the mains switch as
white as a ghost.

Thou sure and reset computer, hear not his steps, which way they
walk, for fear thy very loud beeps prate to him of my whereabouts, and
he seeks to take my treasure, oh horror, for now it's time to cook
tea.

Whiles I threat, he relents - goes to perform the deed himself and
cold looks gives.

(Exit Hubby stage left)

(The doorbell rings)

I won't go, the adventure is not yet done - the bell entices me.
Hear it not, adventurer, for it is a Knell that summons thee from
heaven in to hell.

THE END

(With grateful thanks to William Shakespeare, Macbeth, Macduff and,
of course, Duncan.)

SANDRA'S CHATLINE

If you have any queries about your subscriptions or you fancy a chat then give me a ring on 0942 217044 between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. on a Saturday morning or 7 p.m and 9 p.m. on a Sunday evening.

TELEPHONE HELPLINE

(Spectrum)

ALF BALDWIN Tel: 0452 500512 - Monday to Saturday - 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
MIKE WADE Tel: 0642 763793 - Monday to Friday - 6 p.m. to 7 p.m.
JACK HIGHAM Tel: 0925 819631 Fri, Sat, Sun, Mon. - 7 p.m. to 10 p.m.
WALTER POOLEY Tel: 051 933 1342 - calls at any reasonable time.
DOREEN BARDON Tel: 065 382 509 - calls at any reasonable time.

(BBC)

BARBARA BASSINGTHWAIGHTE Tel: 0935 26174-Mon to Fri- 10a.m. to 10p.m.

(Commodore)

MANDY RODRIGUES Tel: 0492 77305 - Mon. to Sun. up to 10.30 p.m.

(More than one machine)

GRAHAM WHEELER Tel: Bath 0225 26919 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. any day.
SUE BURKE Tel: 061 653 0005 - Monday to Sunday - 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

(Amstrad)

JOAN PANCOTT Tel: 0305 784155 - Any day - Noon to 10 p.m.
DOUG YOUNG Tel: 01 681 5068 - Evenings Mon to Fri anytime weekends.

ISLA DONALDSON Tel: 041 954 0602 - Any day - 12 a.m. to 12 p.m.
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If you would like to volunteer for the telephone helpline then send in your name, telephone number, make of machine, and state the days and times when you would be available.

Shortly, I will welcome you to:

"One Dark Night..."

An Adventure by Paul Brunyee.

"One Dark Night.." features:

- flexible, sentence parsing,
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- character interaction, and
- a host of original problems.

"One Dark Night.." will soon be available on Spectrums.

KINGS AND QUEENS OF THE CASTLE

Update of completed adventures:

730 SGT. JOHN MOORE, c/o Sergeants Mess, RAF Wildenrath, BFPO 42.
Crown of Ramhotep, Prospector, Enchanter, Wishbringer, Starcross.

.....

Update of completed adventures:

DOREEN BARDON, Lendal Cottage, High Street, Slingsby, York. YD6 7AE
Witchhunt, Philosopher's Stone, Castle Thade, Castle Blackstar,
Kobyashi Naru, Zzzz, Wiz Biz, White Door, Shipwreck, Magic Castle,
Prehistoric Adventure, Ring of Dreams, Sandman Cometh (1&2), Open
Door, Smugglers Cove, Merlin's Apprentice, Starwreck, Lifeterm,
Mindbender (1), Green Door, Jade Necklace, Lifeboat, Appleton, Davy
Jones Locker, Blade the Warrior, Diamond Trail, Commando, Quest for
the Golden Eggcup.

.....

LORNA PATERSON, 17 Ochil St., Tillicoultry, Clacks. FK13 6EJ
Aftershock, Bestiary, Beerhunter, Black Fountain, Castle Dracula,
Colour of Magic, Cursed Be The City, Flook 2, Gremlins, Hermitage,
Heroes of Karn, Hobbit, Hunchback, Imagination, The Lost Phirious Pt.
1, Miami Mice, Microman, Mountains of Ket, Mountain Palace Adventure,
Mural, Necris Dome, Rebel Planet, Seabase Delta, Spytrek, Seas of
Blood, Sharpe's Deeds, Teacher Trouble, Time Search, Top Secret, Very
Big Cave Adventure, Warlord, Cutthroats, Enchanter, Hitchhikers Guide
to the Galaxy, Pawn, Planetfall, Sorcerer, Starcross, Witness, Zork
I, Zork II.

.....

Update of completed adventures:

BARBARA BASSINGTHWAIGHTE, 70 Coronation Ave., Yeovil. BA21 3DZ
Escape from Pulsar 7, Strange Odyssey, Waxworks, Island of Xaan,
Greedy Dwarf, Dodgy Geezers.

.....

BUGS AND AMUSING RESPONSES

VILLAGE OF LOST SOULS - Bug - NEIL SHIPMAN

Here's an interesting and, indeed, useful bug : If you go Southwest
from the crossroads while wearing the boots you can pass straight
through the gatehouse doors without unsealing and opening them!

ZORK II - Amusing responses - LORNA PATERSON

Pat dog, lean on club, brush floor, smell rose.

ZORK II - Bug - LORNA PATERSON

If you burn the club to inflate the balloon, then pour water over the
club, it's extinguished. But the location description still shows the
burning club making the balloon rise.

STARCROSS - Bug - LORNA PATERSON

If you are carrying the basket and have not closed it, SHAKE BASKET
will crash the game. (Amstrad CPC version)

.....

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